THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The increase in tourist arrivals to the country during the current year as compared to the last year does not indicate that tourists are avoiding visiting the country.

(b) Safety and security is a State subject. The Ministry of Tourism has advised the State Governments/UTs for deployment of Tourism Police and to take adequate measures for the safety of tourists at all important tourist centres/destinations.

(c) Details of foreign tourist arrivals to the country during the first seven months of the current year, as compared to the corresponding months of the previous year are given below:

Months	2005*	2006*	%change 2006/05
January to July	2183573	2486117	+13.9%

*Provisional

Attraction of foreign tourists

1615. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign tourists visited India during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(b) whether India has not been able to attract more foreign tourists;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken by Government to attract foreign tourists;

(e) whether other Central Government Departments have been requested to cooperate in attracting foreign tourists;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the response of these Departments?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) Foreign tourists arrivals to India during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 are as follows:—

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals (in million)
2004-05	3.64
2005-06	4.05

(b) and (c) India has witnessed a high growth in foreign tourist arrivals in the last 3 years with tourist arrivals registering a growth of 65% from 2.38 million in 2002 to 3.92 million in 2005. This has been achieved against a growth of just 14% in the international tourist arrivals the world over during the same period. It is however, felt that with India's vast bounties of nature; its rich culture & heritage; its rural countryside & wildlife; and practices of Yoga, Siddha, etc., it has lot of potenitial to improve foreign tourist arrivals with further improvements in the tourism infrastructure such as hotels, road, rail & air connectivity, and vigorous promotion & marketing efforts.

(d) A number of initiatives have been taken by the Central Government to attract foreign tourists. These include:—

* Development of tourist spots under its schemes of infrastructure development for tourist circuits/destinations;
* Focusing on growth of hotel infrastructure particularly budget hotels;
* Enhancing connectivity through augmentation of air capacity and improving road infrastructure to major tourist attractions;
* Direct approach to the consumers through Electronic and Print media through the "Incredible India" Campaign;
* Creation of World Class Collaterals;
* Centralised Electronic Media Campaign;
* Greater focus in the emerging markets particularly in the region of China, North East Asia and South East Asia;

* Participation in Trade Fairs & Exhibitions;

* Use of Internet and web marketing; and

* Generating Tourist Publications.

(e) to (g) Tourism being an amalgam of various activities like accommodation, transportation, food & beverages, travel agencies, entertainment services, etc. coordination & cooperation with other Departments - both Central & State, is of vital importance. The Ministry of Tourism has sought the cooperation of the Ministries of Civil Aviation, Home Affairs, Urban Development and Railways on the issues like improving air connectivity & air seat capacity, liberalization of visa regime, setting up of budget hotels on the surplus land available with Railways, identification of hotel sites, etc. While there has been some improvement in air connectivity and addition of air seat capacity in recent times, as also in identification of surplus Railway lands at few places for setting up of budget hotels, the response on other issues has been mixed.

Promotion of tourism in Arunachal Pradesh

1616. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the new initiative policies of Government to promote tourism in NER particularly Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) the names of the approved tourist circuits, State-wise; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to change/relax PAP/RAP/NAP norms to promote tourism in the region?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI) : (a) New initiatives taken by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India to promote tourism in NER are indicated in Statement - I (*See* below).

(b) Names of the approved tourist circuits State-wise are indicated in Statement - II (*See* below).

(c) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Home Affairs constantly reviews the RAP/PAP/ILP regime.